

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS22683

Battery against health care workers is a real problem in Idaho. Health care workers are required to treat patients who come to them in need, which means doctors, nurses and others often find themselves in close physical proximity to violent patients. Frequently, angry patients or those under the influence of drugs or alcohol batter the very professionals who are tasked with helping them. Similarly, some offenders, particularly those seeking drugs, recognize health care workers outside the medical environment and commit acts of violence against them. This bill affords needed protection by making it a felony to batter health care workers while they are performing their duties, or because of their profession.

FISCAL NOTE

An exact measure of the fiscal impact of this legislation cannot be accurately calculated. Currently, there are no mechanisms for gathering data on the number of court cases involving battery against health care workers. Additionally, it is impossible to know to what extent prosecutors and courts will choose to use this statute, though we anticipate few, if any, incarcerations. Based on these unknown variables, an exact fiscal impact cannot currently be calculated.

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